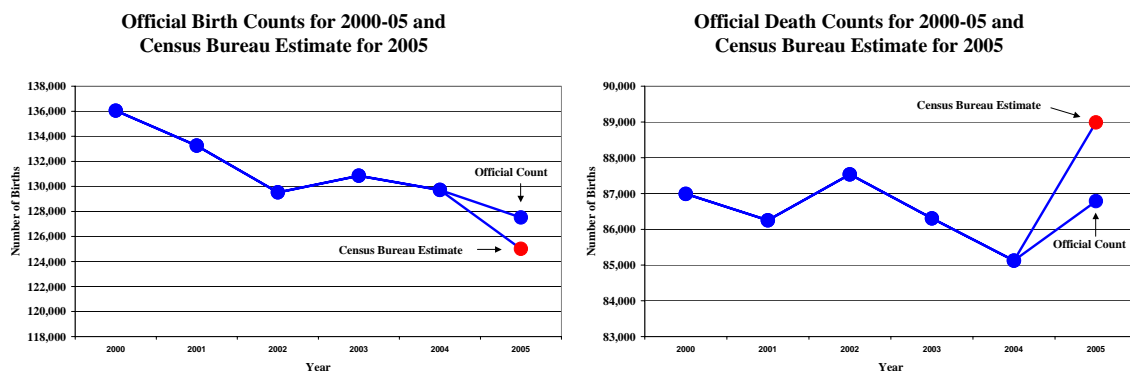


Birth and Death Data for Michigan's 2006 Population Estimates

The Census Bureau's population estimates are based on indicators of births, deaths, and migration for each county. The Census Bureau uses official birth and death counts from each state as well as microdata from the National Center for Health Statistics to determine the number of births and deaths in each county. Data for calendar year 2005 are used to represent the number of births and deaths occurring between July 2005 and July 2006.

The chart below shows the official birth and death counts from 2000 through 2005, as well as the numbers for 2005 that were used in the Census Bureau's latest population estimates. The Michigan Department of Community Health counted 127,518 births in 2005, but the new population estimates reflect only 125,014 births. Likewise, MDCH counted only 86,785 deaths in 2005, but the new estimates reflect 88,987 deaths.



The reasons for the discrepancies are not yet fully understood. The methodology used by the Census Bureau involves estimating births and deaths by Hispanic origin for each race and multirace category. The local results are adjusted to be consistent with projected national distributions of births and deaths by Hispanic origin, race, and detailed multirace category. This adjustment is currently applied in a manner that changes the total number of events in counties and states. This aspect of the methodology may be at the root of the discrepancies for Michigan. Michigan recently implemented a new death certificate that collects detailed multirace data, but birth certificates still collect a single race for each parent and they do not collect race information at all for unmarried fathers. Thus, the Census Bureau's adjustments could increase Michigan deaths and decrease Michigan births if they tend to increase multirace events and decrease single-race events.

Substantial discrepancies have also been noted in other states, and state demographers are working with the Census Bureau to develop methodological improvements that can prevent such discrepancies in the future.

The discrepancies for Michigan are of a magnitude that would normally be of interest only to demographers, but they take on greater significance this year because they account for just over 90 percent of the estimated decline in Michigan's population from 2005 to 2006.